



2008 National Christmas Tree Music Program

The lighting ceremony of the National Christmas Tree on the Ellipse, south of the White House, is the beginning of three weeks of celebration in music. Each night during December, musical groups, primarily from the Washington, DC area, provide entertainment for visitors. It is a one of a kind opportunity to enjoy the sounds of the holiday season against the backdrop of the National Christmas Tree and the smaller trees representing all fifty states, the District of Columbia and the five U.S. Territories, model trains as well as the warmth of the yule log.

National Christmas Tree History

For 85 years, the American tradition of lighting a national Christmas Tree has continued, interrupted only briefly in its history during moments of great national travail.

In 1923, President Calvin Coolidge lit a "Community Christmas Tree" on behalf of "all Americans." A Senator from Vermont, Coolidge's home state, arranged for a cut fir tree from Middlebury College to be erected in President's Park (The Ellipse) for lighting. President Coolidge declined to speak at the ceremony, but he did push a button switch to light a 60-foot tree. Later that

evening, the Marine Band performed in concert near the tree.

Sir Winston Churchill appeared on the South Porch with President Roosevelt for the lighting ceremony in 1941. Both men delivered Christmas messages to the gathered throng before sharing the official lighting duties. By the next year, Washington was under a war-imposed blackout. Lights were placed on the tree in 1942 but never lit, and the tree remained 'dark' from 1942 through 1944.

In 1954, the lighting ceremony was named "The Christmas Pageant of Peace," and a "Pathway of Peace" was established featuring smaller, decorated

trees – one for each state and territory.

In 1963, the tree was not lit until December 22, after a service at the Lincoln Memorial, concluding a 30-day period of national mourning that followed the assassination of President John F. Kennedy.

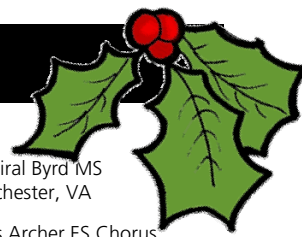
The beautiful Colorado blue spruce that serves as the current National Christmas Tree was planted on the Ellipse in the fall of 1978. Brought to Washington, DC by the National Park Service from a York, Pennsylvania farm, this 40-foot tree has proven to be a hardy specimen. In 2003, the tree celebrated a quarter century of service as the National Christmas Tree.

How To Apply for the 2009 National Christmas Tree Music Program

Musical groups interested in performing in future evening programs for the National Christmas Tree Music Program should visit the National Park Service website at

<http://www.nps.gov/whho> to print out an application. The application must be mailed or postmarked no later than September 18, 2009. For more information, contact President's Park at 202-208-1631.

2008 Music Program Schedule



Saturday, December 6

4:00-4:30 pm	Dawn Crafton Dancers Gaithersburg, MD
5:00-5:30 pm	HPSD Treble Makers Hanover, PA
6:00-6:30 pm	Blue Ridge Thunder Cloggers Waterford, VA
7:00-7:30 pm	Brethren In Harmony Northern VA
8:00-8:30 pm	Brenda Casey Dance Center Wintersville, OH

Sunday, December 7

4:00-4:30 pm	Renaissance Revelers Rockville, MD
5:00-5:30 pm	McLean Bible Church McLean, VA
6:00-6:30 pm	Ambassadors Hagerstown, MD
7:00-7:30 pm	Girl Scouts of Fairfax, VA Fairfax, VA
8:00-8:30 pm	Christmas Singers Gaithersburg, MD

Monday, December 8

6:00-6:30 pm	Chevy Chase Chorus Chevy Chase, MD
7:00-7:30 pm	Children of the Light Dancers Fairfax, VA
7:30-8:00 p.m.	West Springfield HS Madrigals Springfield, VA
8:00-8:30 pm	West Springfield HS Personality Springfield, VA

Tuesday, December 9

6:00-6:30 pm	Hutchinson Farm Singers South Riding, VA
7:00-7:30 pm	Fairfax Baptist Temple Academy Fairfax Station, VA
8:00-8:30 pm	The College of Southern Maryland Chamber Singers La Plata, MD

Wednesday, December 10

6:00-6:30 pm	New Beginnings Lavaca, AR
7:00-7:30 pm	Olney ES Chorus Olney, MD
8:00-8:30 pm	Washington Redskins Marching Band Ashburn, VA

Thursday, December 11

6:00-6:30 pm	St. Mary's Band and Chorus Rockville, MD
7:00-7:30 pm	Linton Hall School Choir Bristow, VA
8:00-8:30 pm	Broadneck HSI Vocal Ensemble Annapolis, MD

Friday, December 12

6:00-6:30 pm	Burley MS Women's Chorus Charlottesville, VA
7:00-7:30 pm	Mayfield Intermediate School Manassas, VA
8:00-8:30 pm	Shenandoah Conservatory Opera Winchester, VA

Saturday, December 13

4:00-4:30 pm	Todd Thatcher & Tony Favero Ashburn, VA
5:00-5:30 pm	County Steppers Dance Team Northern Virginia
6:00-6:30 pm	Upbeat Unlimited Rockville, MD
7:00-7:30 pm	Metropolitan Fine Arts Center Alexandria, VA
8:00-8:30 pm	Nisha Fredericksburg, VA

Sunday, December 14

4:00-4:30 pm	Sound Celebration Stafford, VA
5:00-5:30 pm	Warren County MS Band Front Royal, VA
6:00-6:30 pm	Bull Run Cloggers Manassas, VA
7:00-7:30 pm	The Lake Highland Legacy Singers Orlando, FL
8:00-8:30 pm	The Alexandria Singers Alexandria, VA

Monday, December 15

6:00-6:30 pm	Lovettville ES Chorus Lovettville VA
7:00-7:30 pm	249 Ringers Stafford, VA
8:00-8:30 pm	Stonewall MS Holiday Ensemble Manassas, VA

Tuesday, December 16

6:00-6:30 pm	Pinebrook 4 th & 5 th Grade Choir Aldie, VA
7:00-7:30 pm	Cashell ES Choir Rockville, MD
8:00-8:30 pm	St. Ann's Contemporary Choir Arlington, VA

Wednesday, December 17

6:00-6:30 pm	Garvin Freeman & Friends Ypsilanti, MI
7:00-7:30 pm	Camelot Chorus Annandale, VA
8:00-8:30 pm	Strathmore ES Chorus Silver Spring, MD

Thursday, December 18

6:00-6:30 pm	Admiral Byrd MS Winchester, VA
7:00-7:30 pm	Louis Archer ES Chorus Vienna, VA
8:00-8:30 pm	Senior Women Choir Washington, DC

Friday, December 19

6:00-6:30 pm	Robert E. Aylor MS Chorus Stephens City, VA
7:00-7:30 pm	Star Struck Dance Company Edgewater, MD
8:00-8:30 pm	Westbrook Chorus Bethesda, MD

Saturday, December 20

4:00-4:30 pm	Cardinal Cloggers Herndon, VA
5:00-5:30 pm	The Twirl Factory Alexandria, VA
6:00-6:30 pm	The Fairfax Jubil-Aires Fairfax, VA
7:00-7:30 pm	Ox Hill Baptist Church Choir Chantilly, VA
8:00-8:30 pm	Rockbridge Academy Kantorei Millersville, MD

Sunday, December 21

6:00-6:30 pm	Carol Singers Annandale, VA
7:00-7:30 pm	Steven Gellman Germantown, MD
8:00-8:30 pm	Washtenaw Community College Ann Arbor, MI

Monday, December 22

6:00-6:30 pm	Monikah Washington, DC
7:00-7:30 pm	D.C. Accidentals Washington, DC
8:00-8:30 pm	Tonya Gipson Washington, DC

Tuesday, December 23

6:00-6:30 pm	Revonda Roberts & Harvest Wind Statesville, NC
7:00-7:30 pm	ALICIADINE Atlanta, GA
8:00-8:30 pm	Hearts of Gold Arbutus, MD

